

VZCZCXRO2422
PP RUEHGR
DE RUEHPO #0118 1191755
ZNR UUUUU ZZH
P 291755Z APR 09
FM AMEMBASSY PARAMARIBO
TO RUEHC/SECSTATE WASHDC PRIORITY 0674
INFO RUCNCOM/EC CARICOM COLLECTIVE PRIORITY
RUEHCV/AMEMBASSY CARACAS PRIORITY 1692
RUEHGE/AMEMBASSY GEORGETOWN PRIORITY 2080
RUEHTC/AMEMBASSY THE HAGUE PRIORITY 1679
RUEHAO/AMCONSUL CURACAO PRIORITY 1305

UNCLAS PARAMARIBO 000118

SENSITIVE
SIPDIS

DEPT FOR WHA/CAR - JROSHOLT

E.O. 12958: N/A
TAGS: [PGOV](#) [PREL](#) [NS](#)
SUBJECT: SURINAME: VENEZUELAN AMBASSADOR RECALLED?

¶1. (U) During the Summit of the Americas in Trinidad and Tobago April 17 - 19, Surinamese President Ronald Venetiaan reportedly complained to Venezuelan President Hugo Chavez about the alleged interference of the Venezuelan Embassy into Suriname's internal domestic politics. On April 24th, local media reported that the Venezuelan Ambassador to Suriname, Francisco Simancas, had left Suriname for an unspecified period. The Ambassador denied that he was recalled and indicated that he was returning to Venezuela for vacation.

¶2. (SBU) COMMENT. Locally there is a wide-spread perception that the Venezuelan Embassy strongly supports the National Democratic Party (NDP), the main opposition to the government's ruling New Front-plus coalition of political parties. The NDP is led by Desi Bouterse, former military strongman and main suspect in the trial of the 1982 murder of fifteen political opponents. Venezuelan Embassy staff consistently and openly attend NDP events. Reportedly the Venezuelans are far less enthusiastic in their support for other political parties. Rumors abound that the Venezuelans may also be providing financial support to the NDP -- all actions potentially perceived to oppose the current ruling coalition. END COMMENT.
SCHREIBER HUGHES